

Good evening Members of the Appropriations Committee,

My name is Anna Verdosci. I come from Thomaston, CT, and I am a nursing student at Naugatuck Valley Community College (NVCC). I came to NVCC straight from high school. I was one of the rare students who knew what career I wanted to pursue. I love being around people, and I knew I was meant to serve others. Nursing called out to me, and I have been pursuing it ever since. Once I walked into NVCC, I knew it was the place for me. The faculty and staff are amazing, and will go above and beyond to help their students succeed.

The immense resources at NVCC are aimed for student success. The Nursing Lab offers extra practice with essential skills, which helps nursing students be prepared to perform well in the clinical setting. I have been thankful numerous times for the assistance I received there, especially when you have a patient in a bed asking if this is your first time giving Insulin. I am proud each time to say, "No, I've had a lot of practice." The Academic Center for Excellence, or the ACE Center, offers free tutoring and resources to students needing extra help. When I was preparing to apply for the nursing program, I got a lot of help in the ACE Center. When I was given the opportunity to volunteer and then work in the ACE, I jumped at the chance. I wanted to give back to the school that helped me so much! As a student tutor, it was great to work with and learn from faculty, as well as help fellow students in the subject I love! Science has always been my thing, and it was the greatest to see their faces light up when they finally understood a difficult concept. I soon became familiar with the regulars, and I saw how much help they received from the ACE. The faculty, student workers, and staff gave them the knowledge and confidence they needed to succeed.

NVCC has also offered me amazing leadership opportunities. I have been able to serve on Student Government as the President of the Christian organization on campus, as well as work with the President as a student ambassador. I have also been given the opportunity to serve as the student representative on the Institutional Planning Committee and be a part of the most successful nursing program in the state.

If the school's budget is cut deeply, I worry about the success of our students. We succeed because of the staff who dedicate their time and expertise in the classroom, labs, and tutoring center. If the budget is cut too much more, we may lose either faculty or time with them. If we have fewer staff in the nursing labs, we are going to have students ill-prepared to perform clinical skills on real patients. That could be a risk not only now, but in their future careers as nursing professionals. If we lose faculty in the tutoring center, we are going to have students who can't get the help they need to succeed in their academic classes. Student outcomes are going to suffer due to further lack of funding, and that is not a good outcome.

In summary, it is the faculty and staff that truly make NVCC shine. If the budget is cut, it is going to be the students who will suffer, and the students are our guarantee for a better future. Thank you for your time, and I hope you all have a blessed rest of your evening.